

May 01, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

Varied Arts Events Available This Weekend

'Personal Perspectives'

What makes a piece of artwork appealing to one person, but perhaps not another? This question was asked of Springfield Art Museum staff and volunteers as well City of Springfield and Greene County leaders for the museum's "Personal Perspectives" exhibit that began in January and concludes next month.

Participants were challenged to pick one or two favorite pieces of art from the permanent collection and explain why the artwork appeals to them personally.

"We hoped to reacquaint the public with not only the museum staff, volunteer support groups, and City officials, but also some of the 'gems' in our permanent collection," says Springfield Art Museum Director Nick Nelson.

Highlights from the exhibit will be available for viewing May 3 at the Creative Foundry, 325 W. McDaniel, during First Friday Artwalk.

The Museum will also host a closing reception for the exhibit 5:30-7:30 p.m. May 23. In addition, the evening will include the unveiling of a Special Installation in the Museum's Lobby by artist, Steve Hilton. The artist will give a gallery talk at 6 p.m.

"Personal Perspectives" continues through June 2. Admission is free.

For more information, contact: Nick Nelson at 417-837-5700.

Calaboose museum to reopen

The renovated Springfield Police Museum located in the Calaboose at 409 W. McDaniel, will be open 6-9 p.m. May 3 for First Friday Art Walk. Springfield's Calaboose (a term for a local jail) was built in 1891 and used until the 1940's. The museum offers displays of uniforms, badges, equipment and weapons from the proud history of the Springfield Police Department.

The museum is accepting items to exhibit, either on loan or as donations. Items loaned to the museum will be photographed and documented.

Contact Rob Schroeder at 837-5868 or rschroed@springfieldmo.gov if you have items to donate or loan.

Find the Springfield Police Museum on Facebook under "Springfield Police Museum."

ArtsFiesta!

Springfield residents will get the chance to celebrate Cinco de Mayo with Mexican Sister City Tlaquepaque, Jalisco on the Park Central Square during ArtsFiesta!, a family-friendly celebration of Mexican arts and culture. This year, entry to ArtsFiesta! will be free of charge. Mother's Brewing Company and a Mexican food vendor will be on-site to sell craft beers and Mexican food to attendees.

"Holding ArtsFiesta! on the Square with free admission makes this the perfect way to experience Mexican and Latino culture right here in Springfield, and kick off First Friday downtown," says Cindy Jobe, Springfield Sister Cities Coordinator.

As always, ArtsFiesta! will feature authentic mariachi music and traditional Mexican dancing. Mariachi Viva Xalisco from Tlaquepaque will perform live music. Other festivities will include live dance performances by Grupo Latino Americano and Grupo Libertad, bilingual storytelling for children and an art display from Tlaquepaque at the Park Central Branch Library.

Guests are encouraged to bring a lawn chair. Free parking is available at the College Station and Heer's car parks just west of the Square, public lots at Olive and Boonville and elsewhere downtown.

Great Southern Bank is this year's presenting sponsor for ArtsFiesta! Bilingual storytelling is made possible thanks to support from Dr. Michael Hanks. Other sponsors include Nippes & Associates, the Downtown Springfield Community Improvement District, Mother's Brewing Company, and the City of Tlaquepaque.

For more information, contact: Cindy Jobe, Sister Cities coordinator, at 864-1341 or cjobe@springfieldmo.gov.

Giving Meters

If you passed a homeless person and a parking meter that collects money for charity, which would get your spare change?

A growing number of cities, including Kansas City and St. Louis, are encouraging the latter by providing revamped parking meters for donations. Springfield will soon join their ranks.

Fourteen decorated "giving meters" provided by the City of Springfield Public Works Department to the Downtown Community Improvement District will be installed in downtown Springfield and on Commercial Street.

"Giving meters are a proactive strategy that the Downtown CID recommended to the Park Central Task Force to address the growing problem of aggressive panhandling, and to provide citizens with a more effective option when approached by a panhandler," says Urban Districts Alliance Director Rusty Worley.

Funds collected from the meters (and from a future online giving option) will go to Community Foundation of the Ozarks, which will in turn, distribute the funds to local charities on a quarterly basis to provide housing, meals, counseling and job training to Springfield's underserved.

"The idea is that if a panhandler approaches a citizen and that citizen chooses to make a donation to one of the giving meters in sight of the panhandler instead, the panhandling problem should dry up," says Assistant Public Works Director Jonathan Gano. "Other cities have reduced their problems with aggressive panhandling by utilizing this strategy."

The meters, decorated by local artists and art students from Missouri State University and Drury University, will be unveiled at the Downtown Central CID's booth at Artsfest this weekend. Artsfest attendees will be asked to vote with their coins for their favorite meter. Money collected during the voting process will be used as seed money for the CFO fund.

"The meters are just one of a series of recommendations that this task force came up with to help with the aggressive panhandling issue," Worley says. "Other strategies include increased police patrol, Neighborhood Watch training and more programming for the Square."

While panhandling itself is not illegal in the city of Springfield, aggressive panhandling is, according to Chapter 78, Article 1, Section 78-2 of the Springfield City Code.

"Aggressive solicitation usually includes approaching or following pedestrians, repetitive soliciting despite refusals, the use of abusive or profane language to cause fear and intimidation, unwanted physical contact, or intentional blocking of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The council finds that the presence of individuals who solicit money from persons at or near banks or automated teller machines or in public transportation vehicles is especially troublesome because of the enhanced fear of crime in those confined environments. Such activity carries with it an implicit threat to both persons and property."

It goes on to say, "the law is not intended to limit any person from exercising their constitutional right to solicit funds, picket, protest or engage in other constitutionally protected activities."

For more information about the giving meters, contact: Rusty Worley at 831-6200.